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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 STOCKHOLM 001316

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [EUN](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#) [BS](#) [SR](#) [SW](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S OCTOBER 22 MEETING WITH FM BILDT RE  
IRAQ

REF: A. STATE 140269

[1](#)B. STOCKHOLM 1284

[1](#)C. CAGAN/SILVERMAN OCT. 18 TELCON

[1](#)D. BUTLER/SILVERMAN OCT. 19 EMAIL

Classified By: Ambassador Wood, reason 1.4 (b) and (d).

#### Summary

[1](#)1. (c) Ambassador met October 22 with Foreign Minister Carl Bildt, reviewing the roles of Sweden and the EU in Iraq, Bildt's November 12-14 trip to the U.S.:

#### Iraq:

-- Bildt welcomed a Nov. 1 post-Bahrain MNF-I conference back-brief by NEA DAS Butler and DOD DAS Cagan.

-- Sweden supports efforts to beef up the roles of the EU and the UN in Iraq, and hopes for specific conclusions for the November GAERC based on a joint Sweden/France/UK initiative in the EU.

-- Sweden has strong connections to Kurdish Northern Iraq; Sweden provides assistance now through NGOs and has been asked by Iraqi FM Zebari to put its flag on an assistance program.

Bildt to U.S. November 12-14:

-- Bildt has a meeting with the Secretary November 13 and seeks meetings with Defense Secretary Gates and NSA Hadley.

#### Bosnia:

-- Bildt said that the instability in Kosovo is affecting Bosnia and Macedonia, with Bosnia looking "distinctly fragile."

End Summary.

#### Sweden and Iraq

[1](#)2. (c) During an October 22 meeting largely focused on Iraq-related issues, Foreign Minister Bildt confirmed to the Ambassador that while Sweden would not attend the MNF-I Oct. 29-31 Conference in Bahrain (refs A and B), it would welcome our offer of a November 1 post-conference brief by State NEA DAS Larry Butler and DOD DAS Debra Cagan (refs C and D). Because Bildt will be out of the country in Tbilisi and Kyiv on November 1, he has arranged for Butler and Cagan to meet with MFA Deputy FM Frank Belfrage and a group of other Swedish officials.

13. (c) Bildt was very interested to learn that the Bahrain meeting agenda included a discussion of the UN mission to Iraq. Bildt said he had met with UNSR Stefan di Mistura in New York on the margins of the UNGA and had offered him personnel to support his physical operation, including security, but had not yet heard back.

14. (c) Bildt said he would like to beef up both EU and UN roles in Iraq. Bildt referred to the Sweden/UK/France joint paper that had served as a basis for EU discussion and provided us a copy (faxed to NEA-Butler, NSC-Germano, and EUR/NB-McDowell). The EU's mood on Iraq, Bildt said, had gone from "tentative" prior to the August-September visits of FMs Kouchner and Bildt to more receptive: "what can we do?" The European Commission had also presented a paper on Iraq. Sweden and the UK believe there is a need for a concrete, specific Iraq conclusions at the November GAERC. Bildt seeks to have the EU take a more active role in diplomacy focused on Iraq's neighbors -- Iran, Syria, and Saudi Arabia -- who see Mesopotamia as a battleground.

15. (c) Bildt said attention must also be given to Turkish concerns about the PKK in Northern Iraq. It was important to avoid an explosion in the North. Sweden hosted a large number of Kurds (note: the largest component of Sweden's estimated 100,000 Iraqis), and many of them, after having become Swedish citizens, have returned to Iraq. Swedish was now, Bildt said, commonly heard in Northern Iraq. Sweden is seeking a repatriation agreement with Iraq to facilitate return; its Ambassador was in Baghdad Oct. 22 pursuing this. Bildt said "you will see an increased Swedish presence in Northern Iraq, be it political, commercial, aid development, or all of the above."

16. (c) MFA Near East and North Africa Director Peter Tejler  
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added that Sweden was working through NGOs on enlarging airports and other projects as well as with expatriate-owned (Kurdish-Swede) companies.

17. (c) Bildt said that when he was in Baghdad September 1-2, Iraqi FM Hoshiyar Zebari suggested that Sweden put its flag on an assistance project, rather than providing partial financing and running it through an NGO. (Comment: We suggest that Butler/Cagan come to Stockholm with a specific proposal to raise with the Swedes; something aid-related and in Northern Iraq is likely to be easiest for them to do. End Comment.)

Bildt to U.S. November 12-14  
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18. (c) Bildt said during his November 12-14 visit, he hoped to meet with Secretary Rice (we understand this is confirmed for November 13), Secretary of Defense Gates, and National Security Adviser Hadley.

Kosovo and Neighbors  
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19. (c) Bildt said that the instability in Kosovo is affecting Bosnia and Macedonia. Bosnia, he said, looks "distinctly fragile" at the moment. Bildt had spoken with COE SYG Terry Davis a few days earlier; Davis said there was some doubt November 17 elections would take place. Bildt said the current state in Kosovo "cannot go on."  
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